THE COMMONWEAL

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PIONEERING OF THE PAST

HISTORY, at the present moment, is exposed to peril on two sides. It seems to need saving both from its friends and its enemies, and perhaps from its friends the most. For one robust critic who joins the wizard of Detroit in denouncing it roundly as "bunk," scores may be found who believe it may be saved by elevation to the rank of a speculative science, and hundreds who are only too anxious to popularize it by ridding it of its troublesome husk of scholarship.

Glib writers with nothing at their command but a facile pen, the vogue that comes from being constantly before the reading public, and the sort of second-hand information that may be gleaned from the open shelves of public libraries within a year or six months, are the preferred and trusted guides of the popular mind through a realm which bristles with misdirecting sign-posts and paths that lead to nowhere. The "novelized" biography, the dubious diary, have become fashions of the time. A public which chuckles as each hoax is exposed—none the less indulgently because the joke is at the expense of its own wits—is happily (or unhappily) unaware how many a joker is concealed from it by the false air of erudition that writers of "popular history" catch so plausibly and easily. Public complaisance for plausible and confident statement—public indifference to facts that would rend the tissue of legend as a broom breaks a web, become apparent when some obscure situation, such as the present clash between Church and "state" in Mexico, demands the service only history can give, and not one correspondent familiar with any document, record or piece of reliable evidence prior to 1830, nor one unbiased history written in English that could supply them is discoverable.

The double danger to which history is exposed, of falling into the hands of the theorist or the scenario writer, should not discourage those who are striving to maintain it in its traditional function as the memory, or even the conscience, of our race. In its proper place this week, The Commonweal is reviewing a short biography of one of the bravest, least worldly and most honest historians who ever lived, and one whose repute, as time passes, and its neglects are remedied, is more and more coming to take its fitting place not very far from the galaxy of American historians where Prescott, Motley, Bancroft, and Parkman are fixed and shining lights.

When John Gilmary Shea made his first public appearance before the Catholic Institute of New York, to read a modest paper upon The Early Catholic Missions of the United States, few seem to have realized that the hour had produced its man and produced

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him none too soon. While the records, printed and in manuscripts, of America's Puritan settlement, were being treasured, reprinted and commented like inspired books, carelessness and niggardliness were doing their utmost to ensure that no Catholic records whatever of the vast effort which had accompanied it, and not seldom preceded, should remain to refute slander and correct misconception.

The picture which this devoted scholar and historian, who literally died with the pen in his hand, was forced to draw a year before the close of his life, is heartrending. In the brief but very comprehensive biography which Dr. Peter Guilday has just written under the imprint of the United States Historical Society, there are instances of vandalism and discourtesy which positively take the breath away, and for which, most humiliating of all to be forced to admit, the short-sighted dignitaries of his own Church were far too often responsible.

Shea's monumental work, The History of the Catholic Church in the United States, will probably never be superseded as a work of sheer erudition. Even his style, which the younger historians, far keener upon the track of the telling antithesis than of the unalloyed truth, would probably consider stilted and oratorical, has a merit of lucidity which mere cleverness often misses. But what strikes the student who turns to it fresh from the highly spiced histories for which one famous English biography seems to have set the troublesome fashion, is its sobriety and a quality which Dr. Guilday happily terms "unfailing objectivity."

Will the writing of history ever regain this objectivity without which, or, rather, unless grounded upon which, its highest feats are mere empiricism? The prospects are not very bright. Leaving out of the question for the moment the obvious and gross returns that lie in "popular" treatment, there is no doubt that, to the philosophical and synthetic mind, the temptation to use history as a mere theme for the weaving of plausible theory, and to exclude by a process that is often unconscious, awkward facts that do not fit the thesis, is almost irresistible. There will always be historians with a strong sense of continuity, to whom, in the words of Professor Robert Flint of Edinburgh, the story of mankind is "an immense crucible, in which the phenomena of the lives of peoples and individuals are made manifest under situations that vary according to time and place, permitting us to identify, under an immense variety of forms, certain permanent laws which are the laws of the human spirit."

A moment's consideration will demonstrate to any mind that thinks clearly and without the artful aid of visual images, how inapplicable to the writing of true history is such a comparison, borrowed from another branch of human knowledge altogether. The experimental scientist proceeds to his discoveries by a process of continual essays in the unknown. Yet, having verified them, say, a thousand times, under conditions that he is in a position to control and repeat, and found the result a constant, he can be as certain as it is humanly possible to be that a law presides over phenomena that recur again and again.

In history, not only are the elements necessary for experimentation largely obscure, partial, and even, in some cases, missing altogether, but the deductions must necessarily be carried out by a mind so differentiated from the mind of the past by its acquired knowledge, perceptions and memory, that, to pay the scientific symbolist back in his own coin, they might be represented by temperature, humidity or aridity, and immunity. "Science," a French historian, Dr. Cabanès, who is also a doctor of medicine, has lately concluded, "is a system of generalizations, whose end is to reduce everything to general laws. In the domain of history, on the contrary, the complexity and multitude of facts is such that they resist any attempt to submit them to scientific processes. They can neither be reconciled with any generalization nor subjected to any law."

In proportion, indeed, as our respect wanes for the ready writers who use historical material as stimulus for their imaginations and for the heavy thinkers who base upon it whole inverted pyramids of conjecture, does our respect grow for the humble, devoted workers who take their wages and royalties in the consciousness of a task conscientiously performed. The words used by The Commonweal six months ago when speaking of a contemporary historiographer, Mr. Michael O'Brien, upon whom the mantle of the devoted Shea may justly be considered to have fallen, are so applicable to his self-sacrificing career that we make no excuse for repeating them:

"Only men who write history are aware how greatly truth is indebted to the labors of men who are content to be 'annalists.' They delve into obscure and musty files; they ransack archives inaccessible to the general public; they rescue from oblivion . . . precious items that are all the more convincing for being written in the naïve language of their day. They provide the scientific historian with his material, and the protester against untruth with his weapons."

It is not given to all to reproduce the unworldliness and utter indifference to applause that were the characteristics of John Gilmary Shea. But at a time like our own, when history was never in the making more rapidly and more intensively, it will do no harm to the most fugitive recorder of current events to remember that he too may well be providing future writers with their historical material and so to bear himself as to merit Guizot's definition of the honest craftsman:

"Sedulous search for facts, the study of their organization, the reproduction of their form and movement —this is history as truth would have it written."

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THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

NO DOUBT Secretary Mellon could travel more comfortably if respectable people considered war debts a tiresome old subject which had been laid permanently. Unfortunately, they can hardly do so without seeming eccentric. As arranged, the settlements mean sixty-two years of instalments which blend hard cash with sacrifice, moral casuistry, patriotic sentiment, and hatred of the American assessor. History indicates clearly that what gave long life to the enmity of the South for the North during the years following the Civil War, was not so much the sentiment of a "lost cause" as the constant harrowing consciousness of poverty and exploitation. Are we now to be thrust into the peculiar situation of inheriting the neutral friendship of the Germans, whom we helped to defeat and of reaping the bitter enmity of allied peoples whom we helped to save? That the French, for instance, will learn to applaud the benignity of the United States while grubbing for the gold required for the payments arranged by Mr. Mellon, is a theory relatively naïve in character. Perhaps nobody cares for the good will of a "victorious" France. If so, it should at least be remembered that hostility seldom, if ever, begets silence.

ANGER flashes through the now celebrated open letter addressed to President Coolidge by Clemenceau. No document could prove more admirably that the "Tiger," even after six years of peaceful living, is a person who makes war. From the point of view of political expediency, the letter was as sad a mistake as any Versailles blunder. It embarrasses the Poincaré government at a critical moment when the Premier, having won the initial battles for franc stabilization, is confronted with a deep parliamentary division on the subject of debts. In fact, it says the very things which Poincaré, if he were not hampered with the delicate responsibilities of government, would probably like to say for himself. It crowds upon a page the fiery and chaotic sentiments which sought expression in the parade of the mutilated battalions through the streets of Paris. But it merely aids to saddle more firmly upon France the burden of the debts. Does not Clemenceau realize even yet that he is one of the men to whom a deep American resentment of the whole war has fastened a title of opprobrium? By seeming to be totally unaware of the trend of feeling in the United States since 1918, the Tiger demonstrates a strange naïveté in the face of a complex, difficult, and dangerous situation—a naïveté which is clearly one of the causes of those disasters which now affect his country, and which do not seem to justify any optimistic augury of abatement.

WILLIAMSTOWN INSTITUTE oratory is not always pertinent and convincing, but it has the virtue of being able to interest at least a small number of Americans in topics of world-wide importance. Just now, our international outlook is colored, unfortunately, by both indifference and dilettanteism. On the one hand are those who would placidly let the world go hang; on the other are some who take their little international theses so seriously that they almost seem to have hanged their own minds on a single intellectual peg. Perhaps genuine improvement will come when groups whose business it is to practise charity on a world-wide basis as well as in private, gather, in the company of guests from foreign places, for the consideration of proposed improvements in international life. A profitable step in this direction has been taken, we think, in the name of the Society of Friends. Through the kindness of Mrs. Charles C. Jenkins, an "international house" has been established in the quiet neighborhood of Buck Hill Falls; and a first meeting, at which delegates from the Filipino people were present, gathered representatives of various faiths for the lecture and subsequent discussion. Those in charge hope to arrange a modest but interesting program, and to extend hospitality to as many persons as possible. We feel, however, that the spirit guiding the undertaking is quite as important as the practical results that may be attained. The founders hope to encourage, in a modest way, the spread of amity between nations and to foster the habit of settling differences reasonably rather than forcibly. Mrs. Jenkins has thus set an example which others ought to follow; and for our part we sincerely hope that a Catholic citizen of means will make possible the establishment in the United States of at least one branch of the Catholic Union of International Studies.

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SELDOM has any controversial statement aroused such a chorus of scathing disapproval in the responsible press as the recent utterance of Bishop Adna Leonard of the Methodist Episcopal Church, anent the possibility of Governor Smith as a presidential candidate. So completely is the mask of respect for law and religion stripped from the bigotry and sectional feeling that lies behind it, and so accurately is the search-light of sane thinking directed upon the dark places of fanaticism whence it issued that The Commonweal, or any other organ that might be suspected of an ex parte view upon the matter, is practically dispensed from further comment. They can only register, and not for the first time, a heartfelt recognition of a fact that is sometimes overlooked when the ill-bred diatribes of men who choose the language of the gun-man and thug to affirm their protestantism, and the scorn of the pharisee to enforce their patriotism, are given the air. Behind all the thunder and the shouting, behind the vociferous menaces of these heeled ministers of the Prince of Peace, a solid and sagacious body of opinion exists, in daily intercourse with their American fellow-citizens of other creeds and other racial strains, who will see to it that if the spectre of religious and racial intercourse, exorcised once for all when the American Constitution was written, rears its ugly and atavistic head intent on real mischief, it will be to receive such a brand of obloquy as shall render its return unthinkable.

YOUTH will be served, and the periodical get-togethers of educationalists for which the summer vacation gives an opportunity, seldom break up without having registered their staunch belief in its integrity and in the lack of foundation for any fear that, in bartering new lamps for old, the rising generation is leaving the world at large any the worse for the exchange. At a conference at the University of Pennsylvania, attended by secondary teachers from fourteen states, a poll was held upon the vexed question, and the comparatively innocuous vice of laziness proved to be the only one upon which substantial agreement was reached. To counterbalance it, the teachers, who are far more conscious of their own failings than of those noticeable in their charges, agree in noting "frankness" as youth's outstanding virtue. Without having listened in on the arguments, it is not quite clear by what process of reasoning frankness was given the faculty of earning merit marks. It is possible, one supposes, to be frankly lazy, frankly careless of others' comfort or feelings, frankly indifferent, even, to what professors and teachers, those fossil survivals of another age, may have to say to one another about it all between semesters. Does the frankness with which each shortcoming is displayed avail to cancel the fault? It is all rather confusing. Perhaps in counselling sinners to "sin stoutly," Master Martin Luther was four centuries ahead of his time.

THE publication of the teachers' report from Philadelphia happens to coincide with the receipt of the second instalment of an article upon the Youth of 1911 and of 1926, by M. A. Décout, in the Révue Apologétique, of Paris—a lively periodical from which The Commonweal has more than once extracted pearls of observation. Pursuing his study of the young men in France whose years roughly correspond to high-school age in this country, M. Décout records as their most striking characteristic a neglect, amounting to dislike, for all branches of learning which cannot be speedily converted into material gain. "Remarkable among them," he sums up, "is a very marked consideration for monetary reward in the choice of a career." A senior pupil of a leading Catholic college, questioned by a representative of the Révue Française, admitted that his comrades seemed to him "fascinated" by the attraction of good jobs. In his own words, "all the talk you hear is about big money." It would be interesting to ascertain whether the "laziness" of which the American educators complain is not merely another manifestation of this new sense of values. A determination "frankly" expressed, merely to "get by" with subjects which the young man (or young woman) has not the slightest notion of pursuing once the campus is exchanged for the market-place, will always ring ungratefully in the ears of those who have chosen wisdom as their own mistress. But it is the common sense of which wisdom, divested of spiritual aims, has never been anything more than the poor relation.

THE conduct of Speculum, journal of the Mediaeval Academy, remains exemplary. In the current issue, one may find, apart from the address by Dr. Rand to which reference has already been made in these columns, a number of unusually fresh and competent papers relative to mediaeval studies. We rejoice to see that the Academy fellows now include a number of distinguished Catholic scholars—Cardinal Ehrle, Bishop Shahan, Père Delehaye, Maurice De Wulf, to mention just a few. The journal itself is an astonishing proof of what energy for idealistic study exists in the United States, and one hopes its successive numbers will rise in order like so many unimpeachable witnesses. But no doubt the educated average got no more than their due from Dr. Rand, who chaffed them merrily with sentences like these: "I once heard a lecturer declare that the middle-ages represented a parenthesis in the history of human thought. Well, sometimes the parenthesis, like the postscript of a fair lady's letter, contains the gist of the matter."

AMONG the picturesque memories evoked by the Sesquicentennial celebration is that of the coming to revolutionary America in 1776 of two Polish patriots, Thaddeus Kosciusko and Casimir Pulaski. A recent gathering of Polish men and women round about the

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marble figure which is among the finest adornments of West Point, recalled the romantic career of the man who was largely responsible for the fortifications of the Academy, and whose genius as an engineer served the colonial cause upon many another occasion. Pulaski for his part, is represented by a statue in Savannah, Georgia, which stands not far from the battlefield where he fell fighting. These men in whom the best martial and idealistic qualities of their race were combined, led the Polish migration to the United States. This has now manned many a factory, turned the plow in numerous fields, and mastered the problems of immigrant poverty in its own staunch manner. Though a considerable proportion of those who joined it are still comparative strangers in their adopted land, they must reap no little pleasure and encouragement from the thought of how gallantly their ancestry shared in the struggle for free nationhood.

THE ex-Kaiser has (or had) many monuments, but the letter sent to Hermann Bernstein by the comfortably lodged and opulently subsidized hermit of Doorn, on the occasion of the twelfth anniversary of the blowing-up of the world, easily overtops the loftiest. The Bourbons, we are often told, "learnt nothing and forgot nothing." The Hohenzollerns seem to go them one better. They forget everything and have nothing to learn. When we find a man with Wilhelm's food for thought each time he lays his head on his pillow, declaring that the only road to peace is "to recognize Germany's guiltlessness of the war . . . as well as to restore Germany to her pre-war condition of monarchy under her Kaiser," it is plain we are dealing with a pathological case and with that most hopeless of all complexes—the "persecution mania." A very good test of the distinguished exile's sincerity (and would it might be carried out) would be to borrow Mr. Wells's magic and reverse the time-machine to the last days of July, 1914. Our own idea is that the bet it would then be safe to lay on peace, would make the famous odds offered by the hare for a return match with the tortoise, trivial by comparison.

BUSY with history as is The Commonweal this week, at least a brief note seems called for by Premier Baldwin's surprising request, made before the Anglo-American Conference of Historians in London, for a history of America for use in American schools in which the "incident" of the Revolution should be so treated as to make for better relations between the two branches of the English-speaking race. The tendency to consider history as material which can be treated to secure any desired result is common, but it is strange to find it held by one of Premier Baldwin's mental calibre. The man who lets his net down into the past, seeking anything but the truth, is either fishing in the wrong waters or bound to be tempted to hold his tongue on certain of his catches.

THE SPECTRE OF SIMPLICITY

NEARLY two years ago Mr. G. K. Chesterton, in one of his weekly articles to the Illustrated London News, compared the world in its present condition to an immense army on the march, a considerable proportion of which is becoming increasingly overtaken by doubts as to whether its guides have not led it astray and is slackening its pace in consequence.

Consular and press reports from Europe do not make comforting reading just now for those who base their calculations, personal or general, on a resolute continuance of the forward progress. From Greece comes news that the prohibition on the importation of "articles of luxury," including that headliner in the complex theory of life, the automobile, has been indefinitely extended. In the heart of industrial Belgium, the Archbishop of Malines is preaching "simple living and hard work" as the one panacea for the financial crisis that threatens his country. In Italy, sumptuary edicts, issued by its dictator and "duce," have become a matter of routine. In Germany, notes the French writer, Pierre Delattre, the peasant is ceasing little by little to send his children to the towns for education. He has learned that agriculture pays well, but only "on condition that he keeps his sons and daughters on the farm and has no recourse to hired labor."

It is not even surprising that our major economists should be reluctant to regard this process of simplifying life as anything more than a passing phase, due to impoverishment through war. The alternative is too disheartening—the mere idea of the spectre of self-denial on a wholesale scale making its appearance at the feast of production too unsettling. But to believe that the misgivings of which we have spoken above are only shared by those who have to make a virtue of necessity would be a grave error. In another part of its present issue, The Commonweal is publishing a very thoughtful and suggestive article by a practical New England farmer. Briefly, Mr. William Everett Cram denies that labor-saving appliances in agriculture save any labor at all. Apart from the toil that has gone to make them, and which has merely shifted the burden of drudgery from the man who works in the open air to the man who works in mills and foundries, he notes, as their net result, a steady shrinkage in the profits reaped by the agriculturist or grower, and an inordinate swelling in the profits attained by the middleman. Mr. Cram's is an article to be read, pondered, and digested by all who make the cause of the farmer something besides a recurrent political slogan. Written by an agriculturist in the most prosperous country of the world, it throws its own justifying light upon the conduct of brethren abroad who are tackling what Mr. Christopher Morley terms their "hard and harmless tasks" by a resolute retrenchment of habits learned in easier days.

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MEXICO AND AMERICAN IDEALS

THE conflict in Mexico is essentially a dispute about human rights. It is difficult to understand. Much about it would be baffling even if spectators had at their disposition a complete and easily grasped summary of Mexican history and civilization. Such a summary does not exist, either in English or Spanish. How, then, is an American whose understanding of Catholic methods and aspirations is remote, whose possible fidelity to another creed involves a certain mistrust (subconscious, at least) of the Church, and whose acquaintance with Mexican conditions is based almost entirely upon fleeting impressions gathered at random, to adjudge a fierce battle between liberty of conscience and civil government? The only possible answer is this: he must get, from the press which assumes the duty of furnishing information, a competent description of the points at issue and of the facts brought to light by investigation.

Therefore, an organ of opinion which has the standing of the New York World fails singularly in the present Mexican crisis when it chooses for its eyewitness on the scene a man like Mr. Arthur Constantine. The series of despatches printed under his name indicate clearly his total unfitness for the work which American readers have a right to expect shall be done. We do not accuse him of malice or intentional dishonesty: we simply note that from the beginning he took the stand that Catholics in Mexico are "reactionaries," "hotheads," and "revolutionaries." One of his despatches had this to say: "The failure of the faithful to leap to arms has struck them [the "clerical side"] speechless, and the imprisonment of a number of their ardent laymen has made them careful of what they say. They want to do something, but in the face of the government's show of strength they don't know how to go about it." There are numberless similar statements in Mr. Constantine's copy, but this representative sample is enough to characterize the man. In the first place, a "clerical side" which has lived in Mexico during a good many more years than the government of the United States has been in existence, would be appallingly childish if it believed that a people without arms, prevented by international agreement from getting arms, could suddenly "leap" into fully equipped regiments capable of putting to rout the highly respectable army with which Calles controls "public opinion."

The real bias of Mr. Constantine's mind is revealed, however, by his ignorance of, or indifference to, all the declarations issued by the clergy. Openly and plainly the bishops of Mexico forbade, not merely violence, but "political action"; and in so doing they were unequivocally authorized by the encyclical of the Holy Father which definitely outlined the steps to be taken. These matters were apparently of no consequence to the New York World's correspondent. Ignorant as he was of the fact that ecclesiastical diplomacy disposes of weapons far different from armaments, he came expecting to describe "another Mexican revolution." His mind had been prepared for nothing else; it is probably incapable of being prepared for anything else. That is a private misfortune which the New York World has magnified into a public calamity. Conscious as we are of its position and its customary readiness to support the principles of liberty for which the Church in Mexico is actually fighting, we can only marvel at the failure of the World to realize the inane crudity of its correspondent.

The point at issue is so serious—we mean the solemn ecclesiastical injunction against political revolution—that the step taken by the delegates to the recent convention of the Knights of Columbus invites careful scrutiny. A resolution demanding that the embargo on arms be lifted and that recognition of the Mexican government be withdrawn, was accompanied with a direct appeal from the convention to Washington. These are practical measures, they have the advantage of being concrete, and they can enlist the support of sentiment. But supposing there were any possibility of their being adopted—actually, there is not the slightest—what would be the final result? Only one thing could happen: another revolution, financed by American moneyed men and armed from American arsenals, might overthrow Calles. If this revolution failed, the waste of life and property would have served only to render the condition of Catholics in Mexico worse than it is now. If it succeeded, the next ruler, considering the nature of political life in a country of juntas and ambitious politicos, might be quite as dictatorial and pernicious. Most important of all, however, is this fact: if American Knights of Columbus or other Catholics fomented revolution in Mexico, they would ignore completely the spirit of the papal encyclical and of the bishops' pastoral letter. One necessarily believes, therefore, that the speakers who urged the adoption of opinions so chaotic in character had never adequately envisaged the Mexican problem.

Education, under the leadership of bishops authorized to lead, remains the watchword of the hour. The Catholic cause has everything to gain, nothing to lose, from the dissemination of the facts in the case. It is amazing to find journals of opinion blandly venturing "historical" conclusions without knowing the character of the Mexican past—without even realizing that no reliable narrative of this past exists in English. In view of these circumstances and of what has been said elsewhere in these columns, we respectfully submit that one of the needs of the hour is the appointment of an historical commission, partly Catholic and partly secular in character, to investigate the development of Mexico. Such a commission could do more in a year to enlighten the American mind than can be accomplished by loose talk in a generation.

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MANY YEARS IN MEXICO

By THOMAS ROBINSON DAWLEY, JR.

(The following paper is the first of two articles on Mexican matters written by a non-Catholic who has had exceptional opportunities to see events as an eye-witness. Mr. Dawley's career as a newspaper man has been more exciting than most romantic novels hope to be, and is identified historically with the progress of the Spanish-American War. It need not be said that the truth of everything he writes here is attested to by many of the ablest members of the journalistic profession and by his own record.—The Editors.)

MY ATTENTION was diverted to Mexico at the age of nineteen when I narrowly missed being scalped by Apaches on the frontier, by failing to join a party of engineers with whom I was offered employment on a railway survey in that country. The entire party was massacred by the Indians, and as a matter of course their scalps were taken. This naturally interested me in the affairs of Mexico, and I forthwith began devouring everything I could find relating to that marvelous land, its discovery, its conquest, its people, and their social conditions.

What impressed me most at that time was that it appeared to be a land of internecine strife, constant wars, revolutions, and murders, there having been as many as a hundred revolutionary movements and political pronunciamentos of some sort or another, reported in the course of a single year, not counting any of the individual hold-ups by robbers, pillagers and organized bands of outlaws, many of which infested our frontier along the Rio Grande, or the Apache raids, which necessitated our keeping an armed force continually on the alert along the border and contributed to our war with Mexico in 1846.

Notwithstanding my narrow escape from the Indians, such information as this whetted my desire to come in personal contact with the country and its people. The question I was constantly asking myself as I pursued my inquiries, was: Why all this political disturbance, internecine strife, robbery, murder, and sacrifice of human life? I was determined to go and find out. That was so long ago I hardly dare count the years lest I should begin to feel that I am old.

Since then I have traveled from the Atlantic seaboard to the Pacific ocean, and from the Central American states of Honduras and El Salvador, to the Rio Grande. I have followed the route of Cortés through the morasses of Tabasco, on his famous march to Honduras, and for a time governed the Island City of the Itzas, where he left his wounded horse which the Indians took for a god. I have crossed the arid plains of Yucatan; have listened on a starlit night in the jungles of Guatemala, to the puma's moan, and on the uplands, to the coyote's dismal howl. I have associated with the people, those in high places, and with the lowly; I have seen the work of despots and tyrants, their oppressions of the poor and weak.

As for acts of injustice, murder and rapine, I have had experiences a plenty. Soldiers with fixed bayonets have closed in on me, prison doors have clanked behind me, and in turn I have been in command, a power behind the throne, have faced artillery and rifle fire, directed the building of defenses, helped in the overthrow of at least one tyrant, and as an observer when not an actual participant, I have been in close touch with wars and revolutions under eight flags. With this experience extending over the many years that I do not wish to count, I can say that much of that which is reported, and subsequently written as history, is pure "bunk."

Concerning the present conflict between the government of Mexico and the Catholic Church, nearly all articles being printed now are the special pleadings of interested parties, written, to use a Spanish proverb, according to the color of the glasses through which the writer looks. This is exemplified in a symposium printed in the July issue of Current History, in which a distinguished Catholic layman presents the Catholic viewpoint, a Methodist bishop presents the Protestant view, and the Mexican ambassador that of the government, backed by a lawyer for the Mexican consulate, a Mexican educator, and the secretary of a labor federation.

One may take his choice of these views. I hold no brief for either of the interested parties. I belong to no church; have never subscribed to any religious creed, nor am I employed by any government, educational or labor organization; neither am I subjected to the editorial autocracy of a newspaper or other publication. What I write is based on knowledge gained through experience and research work, and, I may add, is in conflict with many of my early teachings.

One of the things that impressed me most in my early association with our neighbors across the border, was their mendacity. Perhaps this was due to my early environment where lying was looked upon as worse than stealing. The following is a literal translation of a paragraph from a series of articles appearing in a weekly paper while I was in Guatemala recently, and what the writer states is equally applicable to Mexico:

> As regards lying, we are liars from the time we are in the cradle; we are born with the venom in our blood. It is an atavic vice, a malediction on us; it is our moral cowardice, the education which we receive, and our inspiration to fame; our personal and social stimulus. The one who can lie the best is the smartest, the one for whom there is appreciation, consideration, esteem, and honor.

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This is a strong indictment; but it was written by a native who knows his people, who is a "liberal," and it was printed in a paper the editor and publishers of which are "liberals." If this is true, and I can vouch for its truth as particularly applicable to the political element in power in both Central America and Mexico, calling itself "liberal," then I ask how are we to believe anything they write or tell us?

A word in respect to the political party that calls itself "liberal." By its opponents the leaders are called libreuñas, or free fingers, because of the allegation that their policy is to grab everything that they can get their hands on. It had its origin in the colonial days, and was made up of adventurers who came to the new world for the sole purpose of making money. They did not bring their wives with them. They took Indian women for mistresses, and to manage such household affairs as they might have. Cortés early recognized the evil consequence of this, and attempted to remedy it by ordinances requiring every settler to marry. Measures were also taken to induce the newcomers to bring their wives and families with them, and the crown issued various decrees to the same effect.

A recent historian states with respect to these newcomers that "they were wild adventurers for the most part—gold-thirsty traders, often less civilized in their notions of truth and in the refinement of their manners and mode of life than the races whose lands they invaded. Yet to them only were the doors of preferment open in the Church, in the army, or at the bar."

This is a fair example of how history is written. The doors of "preferment" were not open to this class of adventurers, which was one of the causes of dissention in the colonies and eventually brought about the creation of the "liberal" party. In the next paragraph the writer states: "In the opposite social scale were the Indians, the pure native races, who were scarcely recognized as having any rights which the Spaniards were bound to respect," which is as big a falsehood as ever written; and there follows this, "A third class was composed of Creoles, as they were called, the white natives of pure European descent. These, although the possessors of wealth, and arrogating to themselves positions of equality with the Spaniards, were regarded by the latter in almost the same category as the native Indians." Another falsehood.

It was the policy of Cortés at the very beginning of the conquest to allow the Indians to continue their respective governments under their own chiefs. All he asked of them was to give up their idol worship, their human sacrifices, and practice of eating each other; to accept the Christian religion and acknowledge the sovereignty of Spain. On convincing the Totonacs that the Christian God was better than any of the gods by destroying their idols, cleansing their blood-stained temples, and setting up an image of the Holy Mother in a bower of flowers, Cortés was furnished with 3,000 of their warriors to invade the domain of the Tlascalans and convince them of the same thing, and these, on their conviction, in turn furnished Cortés with more warriors than he could handle to invade the next domain. And thus the conquest of a mighty empire was accomplished by the Indians themselves.

As for either the Indian or the white Creole being barred from public office, or not having the same rights and privileges as Spaniards, titles of nobility as marks of special merit were conferred on both, and while the Indians were privileged to maintain their own governments and governors, many of the royal appointees holding high offices, were born in the new world. Among them were captains-general, viceroys, bishops, priests, and prelates. As a matter of fact, it was a well-defined policy of the Church to educate natives for the priesthood, and as for the political offices, I myself have handled from the colonial archives a Royal Cedula directed to the viceroys, captains-general and chief justices of the Spanish dominion, calling their attention to the law which gave all Spanish subjects, whether born in the new world or not, whether Creole or Indian, the same rights of citizenship as those born in old Spain. Among them the last mentioned captain-general of the "kingdom of Guatemala," Don Carlos de Urrutia, was a native of Cuba born in Havana.

The officials sent from Spain, the officers of the Royal Chancelleries, justices of the audiencies, viceroys and captains-general, or other executives for the administration of the colonial governments, were men selected for their probity, and were far from being the "lame ducks" as represented by our historians who view these things from the political methods which frequently occur with ourselves. They were for the most part men with homes and families, and in removing to the new world they took their families with them and preserved the family spirit. It was the preservation of this family spirit that engendered the hatred of that element of "gold seekers" who were without other family ties than the offspring of their Indian mistresses. This "gold seeking" element stigmatized those who preserved the family spirit, up to the time of the wars of independence, as aristocrats, and on the definite formation of the so-called "liberal" party, they were called serviles.

This seeming anomaly is explained by the fact that those who preserved the "family spirit" adhered to the Church and religion, and from the early days of the conquest it was the Church and religion that stood by the weak, the unfortunate and the lowly, as against the "wild adventurers—gold seekers and traders," or their descendants who were for the most part lacking in the family spirit. The masses learned by experience that their interests lay with the religious or so-called aristocratic element, and consequently, as in the course of time the poorer and more humble element became identified with this element in which their safety lay, the "liberals" called the political party which was its outgrowth, the "conservative" or "servile."

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MACHINERY ON THE FARM

By WILLIAM EVERETT CRAM

IT IS taken for granted so generally that work of all sorts has been rendered more efficient by modern labor-saving devices, that a word from the other side may prove worth while. In spite of all improvements in the way of manufacture and transportation, the difference between the market value of the raw material and the price of the finished product when it finally comes into the hands of the consumer, gains on us steadily.

From biblical times down to the latter half of the last century, a tithe, one-tenth, of the farmer's grain paid the miller. Fall and winter, year after year, I have hauled my corn to the old water-power grist-mill at the Falls and paid the miller for grinding it, approximately one-tenth of the value of my grist. The old practice of giving the miller his tithe in meal, was abandoned just before my time.

Now steel-burred, gasoline-driven mills have replaced water-power and mill-stones, and I pay the miller one-fifth of the value of my grist, and have yet to see a steel-burred mill that can grind my corn half so well as the old mill-stones used to do.

Twenty-five years ago, when standing pine timber sold for $12.00 per 1,000 board feet, the price of finished lumber was fifteen or twenty dollars. At the present time, $8.00 per 1,000 feet is considered a good price to get for standing timber, while finished lumber has soared to sixty and eighty dollars. If a farmer nowadays should sell his timber standing and take the money that he gets for it to the lumber market, investing it in planed boards, he would probably get not more than one-eighth as much as he would have through a similar transaction twenty-five years ago.

The other day I went into my pasture and cut a pine, two feet through at the stump. It took me two hours to saw it down, log it off, and roll the logs onto the skids ready to load on the sled. I hired a neighbor to haul it to a sawmill in operation about two miles away. The cost of hauling, sawing, and returning the lumber, came to $3.25, and I got twenty dollars' worth of boards and plank, besides nearly a cord of wood from the top. If I had sold the tree standing, it would have, at the most, brought $3.00.

Evidently, the difference cannot be laid entirely on the increased cost of labor, where the lumber-dealers are wont to lay it. The lumber-dealer himself, in making an offer for a woodlot, now has to take into account the cost of keeping a car and running it long distances over back roads and logging paths.

The same rule seems to apply to all buyers. A local cow-trader said recently that he could not afford to buy on so small a margin as he used to. In former days he could get about with a horse and buy all the cows and calves he wanted within a few miles of home, but now he must keep a car and go long distances in competition with other traders who scour the country from all points of the compass.

Where the shore-line is low and the sand stretches out in wide beaches at low tide, there are apt to be broad acres of salt-meadows between the dunes and the upland. At Hampton, New Hampshire, these meadows are several miles in extent, probably one thousand acres or more in all, intersected by three crooked rivers and innumerable salt-creeks, which, at ebb-tide, lead the sea-water which has overwhelmed them, back again to the ocean. Narrow ditches, three feet in depth, formerly drained every rod of meadow not reached by the channels of natural formation. From the time of the first settlers until within the last forty years, the grass on these wide salt-marshes was mowed down yearly by scythes, and raked and stacked by hand labor, making winter provender for the cattle.

The meadow-grass along the fresh-water reaches of the streams stretching inland for a dozen miles or more, was also harvested in like manner. Now fresh- and salt-meadows are alike neglected. I have just sold the salt-marsh which, in my father's time, was valued at $50.00 an acre, for $2.50 an acre, and considered myself lucky to find a purchaser at that price. If it had not bordered the upland, it is doubtful if I could have given it away, and curiously enough, the fall in value of the wild meadows began within a very few years after the mowing machine and the horse-rake displaced the hand-rake and the scythe in the work of gathering in the meadow-hay.

The last few seasons have been deficient in summer rainfall, and as a consequence, hay of all kinds has been in good demand—in fact, impossible to get at any price just now at the close of a long, hard winter. Many farmers are wondering what they can feed their cows between now and pasturing time; yet last summer, when the drought made a short hay-crop absolutely certain, it was difficult to sell even the best upland hay standing—and all because of the high cost of hay-making under present conditions. One local farmer hired a gang of men in haying time last summer and went with them to do his haying, having his own farming tools and horses; but long before all the hay was in the barn, he found that in spite of the favorable weather, it was costing him more than the hay was worth. He quit work, leaving acres of good hay standing untouched.

In Wolfboro, New Hampshire, not many years ago, there lived (and for all that I know to the contrary, he lives there now) a farmer who, though prosperous, was certainly anything but progressive. I am told that

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he refused to have even a mowing machine or horse-rake on his broad acres. At the close of the lumbering season, he hired a gang of lumber-jacks to work his farm, using the simple hand-implements of former generations—yet he paid his bills better than most.

In my grandfather's time, the potato-growers from Maine hauled their crops in ox-carts over rough roads and across the "Shun Pike," through his town, to the markets in Newburyport, Massachusetts—twenty or thirty ox-teams often following in close succession. I have read the old memoranda giving in detail the prices received in shillings and pence, and the goods taken in exchange—broadcloth, groceries, and rum. Averaging one season with another, the Maine farmers of today, who send their potatoes to market by truck and steam railway, get less in exchange for their crops, after transportation and other expenses are paid, than did their grandfathers.

The price of apples and other fruit in the city market is about four times what it was forty years ago; yet the price offered for them in the orchard has not increased, while the expense of keeping the orchards free from blight, moths and other pests, is out of all comparison to what it used to be.

Men now come long distances from the city in trucks, to buy from the farmer for the city markets; but the prices they offer for my lambs and mutton are scarcely one-half of what I can get by having my lambs and fat sheep killed on the farm, and selling them to my neighbors. Last fall I had a beef-cow in fair condition—but the best offer I could get for her was $18.00. I had her killed and dressed on the farm, kept one-quarter, and sold the others to my neighbors, in that way clearing $40.00.

One man who owns a large dairy and milks his cows by electricity, was consulted in regard to the advisability of buying a milking machine. He said:

> There are two sides to the question; it costs more to milk your cows by machine, but if your hired man leaves you, you can do the work yourself, no matter how many cows you have. On the one hand, it is possible, by using the greatest of care, to have the milk cleaner than it ever was by the old method; on the other, the least carelessness gets the milk in much worse condition than it ever was by hand-milkings. I know of one man who had no trouble in selling his milk until he installed a milking machine, when it was refused by the dealers on account of its dirtiness.

When my cousin's corn was ready for the silo last fall, he hired two men—one about seventy, the other, eighty years old—to cut one piece by hand with home-made corn-cutters, paying them each $3.00 a day. The other field he had cut with a new two-horse corn-cutting machine. The field cut by hand cost $3.00 an acre—the other, $7.00 an acre. One of my neighbors who keeps twenty head of cattle, has his corn-fields cut by hand when he can get men enough to do the work—only resorting to the reaper when the frosts threaten his crop; and, here is where the one great saving of farm machinery comes in—getting urgent work done on time in the spring ploughing as well as in harvesting. I much prefer to do my ploughing with horses, but often find it more profitable to hire it done with a tractor-plough, though the cost per acre is greater, and the work, as a general thing, not so well done—for the few days gained in getting in the seed may turn the balance in favor of the tractor.

Wherever farming is done on a large scale, especially when one main crop is raised, modern machinery unquestionably works to good advantage; but more and more the average farmer is being driven to diversify his crops, in order first to supply the needs of his household and his stock—for selling at wholesale and buying at retail is a losing game.

More than one person has said to me of late: "You can't afford, nowadays, to sell on the hoof and buy by the pound."

Simple farming tools, like the plough and harrow, have rendered untold benefit to the farmer; but more complicated machinery—planters, harvesters, manure-spreaders, etc.—used only for a few days or weeks each season, are rusting while standing idle, and in many cases fail to pay for themselves. Where neighbors can agree to exchange work, each owning one particular machine, a saving can be effected, but the advantage of getting your work done on time is lost when you have to wait your turn.

On the whole, I am inclined to think that if all the men now engaged in the production of modern farm-machinery—beginning with those at work in coal and iron mines and foundries, through the whole list of managers, factory-hands, salesmen, advertising artists, freight-haulers, and truck-drivers—were to leave their present occupations and go back to the land, working with only such tools as were in use a hundred years ago, the crops each season and their market prices would not differ so very widely from those of the present. I do not know of any crop that now gives greater yield to the acre, for a given amount of work, than it formerly did.

Most crops can be raised more cheaply where large areas can be roughly ploughed and harvested by one man, though the yield per acre is, of course, much less than with intensive cultivation; and yet, as the population increases and land-values rise, intensive cultivation becomes more and more a necessity, and hand labor must, in part at least, replace machinery.

Lichen

Forgotten in a forest by still lakes
A dim, subdued design the lichen makes,
Trailing its quiet tones over the bark,
Stranger than silver, neither light nor dark.
A furrowed shadow somewhat intricate,
The tall trunk rising unaware of it,
More curious than leaves, more delicate.

KENNETH SLADE ALLING.

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THE RETURN OF THE DEVIL

By CUTHBERT WRIGHT

READERS of Arthur Machen's story, The Great God Pan, will recall Mr. Clark, the gentleman who secretly hugged a belief in fantasy and spent his evenings in compiling what he called his Memoirs to Prove the Existence of the Devil.

The various peregrinations of Satan through polite literature form, indeed, a very interesting subject of study, even if one goes back only so far as Milton. That great poet, being also a Puritan, not unnaturally made Satan the real hero of Paradise Lost. No one can read the following proud passage and not agree that Milton was only really inspired as an artist when he approached the more infernal portions of his magnificent; if formidable, epic:

> Darkened so yet shone
> Above them the Archangel: but his face
> Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
> Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
> Of dauntless courage and considerate pride,
> Waiting revenge.

It is quite perfect in its nuance of involuntary and almost passionate admiration. The purpose of Milton might have been to justify God's ways to man, but he had the Puritan's conception of God, and the result was that he only succeeded in justifying God's enemy.

Puritanism, whose one great poet had just done his best to transform the Evil Principle into the grand and sympathetic hero of a losing cause, now proceeded to debase the Devil to the sphere of a nurserymaid's bogie to frighten infants and darkies. The result of this progressive degradation is that no one in Protestant America takes Satan very seriously any more, outside the anthropomorphic rites of camp-meetings and African conventicles. The second fall of Satan, considered as an élan vital, began very early in Puritan history. The Salem witch trials which, under other circumstances, might have given New England literature a gloomy and fascinating background of folk-lore, have a shabby, suburban, pinchbeck element, despite Hawthorne's fine attempt to raise them to the level of transatlantic sorcery. And two centuries did not pass before the unfortunate Demon had sunk in America to the congenial society of Mr. Sludge the Medium and the votaries of new "thought." It is a wonder that he did not die of it altogether, unless his real triumph is in convincing the world that he does not exist.

In short, the ultimate result of "the Gospel light that dawned in Boleyn's eyes" was to relegate the Devil to the region of dusty broomsticks and old wives' tales where he becks and grimaces as harmlessly as Punchinello in a peep-show. "And a good thing too," someone might well interject. Certainly, if evil, as the new "thinkers" are fond of asseverating, is merely another illusion of hag-ridden humanity. Very questionably, we might add, if evil really exists as a positive principle. At all events, the degradation and sham death of the Devil has only been of brief duration. Lately he has been revived startlingly.

His first public reappearance was, as might have been expected, in Paris during the 'nineties. It was the decade of Zola (vide La Terre and La Bête Humaine); of the Russian Entente; of the persecution of the Church by politicians affiliated to the lodges of French Freemasonry; in short, an apparently fruitful field for a revival of belief in practical Satanism. Numerous grew the cases of "possession"; it was even rumored that the abominable sacrilege called the black mass was practised by a few worn-out degenerates who, wearied of all else whether good or bad, were trying to persuade themselves that they believed in Satan and quite loved him. A novelist, who had hitherto occupied his leisure moments in a government office in producing a few brief and dismal studies in naturalism, now devoted his limited energies to compiling data on the new demonology, delving into Görres and Fra Sinistrari, investigating the movements of a disgraced priest, later to be transferred to the pages of Là Bas as "a certain canon."

At about the same time, Arthur Machen in England published his Great God Pan, followed by the unforgettable Hill of Dreams.

Machen was of old Welsh ancestry, son of the Vicar of Llanddewi in the heart of the Gwent valley in South Wales. I have seen the rectory where he presumably grew up, an ancient house, curtained by black beeches, and in the course of wandering through Caerleon, once the glittering Isca Silurum of the Legions, past the Roman bridge, under the domed hills, crowned by lonely Norman churches or bits of mysterious woodland, I thought of the probable effect of this lovely but occult landscape upon the mind of a Celtic youngster of Anglo-Catholic upbringing and strong literary bent. The effect can be seen in a number of books which are among the few glories of contemporary English prose. But apart from their descriptive beauty, disquieting folk-lore and magic, white or black, the most interesting thing in Machen is his theory of absolute evil, as announced by Ambrose in The White People.

"Sorcery and sanctity," he said, "are the only realities. Each is an ecstasy, a withdrawal from the common life. . . . There are many, I think, who eat dry crusts and drink water with a joy infinitely sharper than anything within the experience of the 'epicure.'"

"You are speaking of the saints?"

"Yes, and of the sinners too. You are falling into

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the error of confining the spiritual world to the supremely good, but the supremely wicked, necessarily, have their portion in it. . . . There have been those who have sounded the very depths of sin who all their lives have never done an 'ill deed.' "

This theory of the unconscious Satanist explains much that is obscure in Machen's first long novel, The Hill of Dreams. Lucian Taylor, the unhappy hero of that masterpiece, is of the stuff that both saints and demoniacs are made of in his ability to withdraw from the common life. His experiments in that special sphere begin when he is a lonely boy in Gwent, driven almost mad by poverty. Moreover, he is surrounded by a set of cackling and malignant people, inferior in mentality and manners to the swine themselves. One day at sunset, standing above the little town, hatred for it and his fellows floods his heart, and he says aloud to that immemorial valley, whose ether is imprinted, impregnated with so many age-long hates, lusts, and sorceries: "I would rather call the devils my brothers; I would rather live in hell." "And there is a glow in the sky as if great furnace doors were opened." From that moment his internal life begins, and all is fair and well with him. The sordid town, with its brick villas and shabby lanes, dissolves into the golden Isca Silurum of the Romans with its tesselated pavements, its murmurous baths, the red and green of its roses and meadows, its laughter of fauns in the thicket. Dream and reality are blurred; sound and scent and color are so blended that "a boy's innocence is as a perfume and the roses become a chant," and all this is transmuted in a prose which is simply incomparable, symphonic. Eventually Lucian forsakes his mystic town for London, a grey wilderness of unending streets, and at this point might be inscribed like the heading in the Graal Historie: Here Begin Terrors. He who reads between the lines perceives that Lucian is being pursued by something he perhaps evoked long ago in the pleasant land of Gwent. Shadowy forces gather about him and strange companions; he is beleaguered by fantastic miseries and growing madness. He is no longer the happy and unconscious Satanist since he now senses his danger, but he has lived the life of dreams so long that he cannot move hand or foot in escape. And at the end when his lifeless body is discovered, there is still a glow in the dead eyes "as if great furnace doors were opened."

Thus, transliterated in a fashion which bears about as much relation to Machen's own style as the alphabet to the poetry of Lycidas, is the motivation of a story unique in our literature. Never has there been written an imaginative work with such tremendous implications, aesthetic and moral, yet it is almost unknown. Without once capitalizing the word "devil," Machen has written a book whose protagonist is most certainly that Evil Principle which consists in "taking heaven by storm." It is noteworthy, too, that the doomed hero or victim is one who, throughout the book never commits a bad action in the world's sense of the word.

Had he so chosen, Mr. Francis Brett Young could have produced a book with something of this power when he produced Cold Harbour. He imitated Machen once before to some advantage in his first novel, Undergrowth. Moreover, the materials, the "accidents" of Cold Harbour are somewhat similar to those of The Hill of Dreams—witchcraft, mediaevalism, Celtic magic, the Roman occupation, and the rest. Even in its actual form, Cold Harbour is an admirable yarn. One of the facetious dullards who expatiate daily in the "column" of a New York paper, remarked, however, that the book left him cold. This comment may be unintelligent without being altogether undeserved. In his diabolic Mr. Furnival, Mr. Young had a complicated character of considerable rich possibilities. The reader is cheated into believing at first that Mr. Furnival is another unconscious "possessed." When one learns that he is simply a vulgar hypnotist and an incredibly "wicked man," there is only one thing to do and that is to finish the effort as quickly as possible and go to bed. This idiotic itch to be "scientific" and modern, to chart the sunset tracts of Lyonesse with a complete surveyor's kit, and people The Hill of Dreams with the discouraging phantoms of Dr. Freud, has ruined many a better man. They are content not to be artists, so long as they are up to date.

There are none of these coy relapses into Main Street in the work of Mr. Geoffrey Dennis, author of Harvest in Poland, a very remarkable novel which has passed by our reviewers practically unnoticed. Here is a book so relentlessly realistic, so "modern" in one sense, that it ventures to lead the reader into a Parisian milieu spécial, partly to show the author's reaction to a pre-war world given over to Satan, as he conceives it, guzzling, tippling, making swinish love, hating and self-hating. Yet never was a book so bathed and saturated in the supernatural. The hero, a sort of primitive Christian, a Plymouth Brother, but a gentleman and an Oxford graduate, goes to the other end of Europe to rescue a soul possessed by the Demon in person. The amazing, elliptical, half-tortured writing is of one himself possessed by a magic more intense than that of imaginative ecstasy, of artistry, for the author is apparently a Christian.

This deference to the Devil on the part of three contemporary writers, all of great talent is, to say the least of it, impressive. Formerly the clergy were only too well content if they could exorcise the Devil from their parishes. These writers appear to be bending every effort to put him back into our books. At all events these three novels stand up like statues richly dight among rows on rows of dull novels resembling brick and plaster villas, all proclaiming in a damnable reiteration and a detestable style that there are milestones on the Dover Road.

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POEMS

Villanelle of a Sad Summer

Vainly is dream on dream of beauty laid,
Shalott is doomed, Shalott is desolate.
Sir Launcelot forgets the lily maid.

No one shall notice, if the gardens fade,
Nor care if winter clamors at the gate.
Vainly is dream on dream of beauty laid.

Who is there now to go, in bright brocade,
Singing like one born gay and fortunate?
Sir Launcelot forgets the lily maid.

In snow-white garb the ground should be arrayed,
Mourning with her who mourns a bitter fate.
Vainly is dream on dream of beauty laid.

Sorrow has found a new heart to invade.
The grave-tools have been gathered, and await.
Sir Launcelot forgets the lily maid.

What can be given to one by love betrayed?
Summer's own passion is inadequate.
Vainly is dream on dream of beauty laid.
Sir Launcelot forgets the lily maid.

HELENE MULLINS.

Ordeal by Fire

At first we tried to make her come away,
Using the rough brutality of love;
No maxim was too stern for us to say,
No truth too fierce—and still she would not move!
Day after day, immobile, vigilant,
She stood against the window, lost in pain,
And we who had been harsh were supplicant—
Yet all that could be said was said in vain.
Spent bit by bit with grief she let us place
Cushions whereon she knelt in meager ease;
Molding the frozen marble of her face
Was brief and lovely gratitude for these.
Struck into hopeless silence toward the last,
We watched the frail flag lowered from the mast.

MARGARET TOD RITTER.

Poplars

Slim poplars, cutting the night
In the pale moon's dusky light,
Is this gentle swaying
Your own way of praying
In the silence of the night,
Like a holy candle's light?
Are you whispering the Name,
Like the candle's timid flame?

JOSEPH KINNEY COLLINS.

Changeling

I who would be singing
Must discipline my throat
Lest the growing fledglings
Never learn a note.

I who would be dancing
Soberly must go
Teaching little children
Things I do not know.

I who would be dreaming
Must steer with watchful eye
Over seas uncharted
Where grim perils lie.

I go forth sedately,
A parent wise, austere—
Hold, O heart, your laughter
Lest I perish here.

E. W. CHANDLER.

The Return

There are wild goats here, and a loneliness
That is unkind . . . Once she flung herself down
With a fierceness at his feet, her coarse dress
Crumpled beneath her, sobbing in her brown
Hair . . . Desolate loneliness where they led
The black Simon and the white Christ; where they
Gathered them in and stared at the pale head
And took great gulps of rich wine from the clay

Jugs at their feet . . . Out across a gaunt sky
Are bald clouds; grasses start them nervously
From the mute earth; westward the sun's eye,
Sick with weariness, trembles listlessly . . .
Waiting . . . Much as you and I that long night
Waited . . . one at his left, one at his right.

S. BERT COOKSLEY.

A Poem

A poem is a lovely thing,
A fairy's wing,
Aswing.

A poem mourns its briefsome life,
Its futile strife—
A fife.

A poem is a merest whim,
A gesture dim—
Of Him.

JOHN ROSE GILDEA.

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COMMUNICATIONS

MEXICANA

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—Dr. Antonio Castro-Leal, acting head of the Mexican Embassy at Washington, and therefore spokesman for the Mexican government, has issued his Case for the State. (New York Times, August 1.)

He thus sums up his case against the Church: "The Church exercised a complete dominion over the country during three centuries, without being able to launch a movement of progress that would, when independence was achieved, place Mexico among the nations enjoying modern standards of life."

What does the Doctor mean by "modern standards of life"? Are they: sanitary plumbing, up-to-date sewers, jitney buses, and bull-less bullfights? He leaves us not in doubt: "After the war of independence, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Church in Mexico enjoyed a great political sway, but it never represented in fact, a constructive power for the people."

That is only emphasizing his former paragraph; he continues: "Upon the triumph of the Liberal party, it was possible to separate the Church from the state, limiting the religious institutions to spiritual action, the only one which belongs to them."

So that's the "case"! A minute ago, Dr. Antonio Castro-Leal condemned the Church for confining itself during three centuries and more to spiritual activity, and he says the movement now is to limit the Church "to spiritual action." Should he not have written "limit the spiritual action"? That's what his government is doing. Let the Mexican government, if it will, separate the Church from the state. They have been separated for over seventy years save for the government's throttling grip. France has done it and the Church survives. Other countries have done it, and the Church succeeds. Why separate the Church from the people? That is the aim of the "Liberal party." Was ever any name so inappropriately chosen?

The spokesman for Mexico plays to the American gallery: "The revolution of 1910 inaugurated a movement of new political ideas, and Mexico is at present passing through a creative period, spreading knowledge among the lower classes, establishing credit institutions for the benefit of industry and agriculture, opening roads and irrigating lands.

"At the present time when the country is being reconstructed, the government of Mexico has declared that the reactionary elements which are obstructing its way are instigated by the Church."

Thus Dr. Antonio Castro-Leal packs the "case" in a nutshell. But there is a maggot in the shell. Any tourist to Mexico could see its peace, progress, and prosperity under the "dictatorship" of Porfirio Diaz. Mexico had its industries, its irrigation ditches, and the finest railroads in America. It had its banks, it had its schools. It had 14,000 of them. They were "Church schools," if you will, they were the only schools Mexico had—and why not, since the New York Times correspondent says Mexico is "99 percent Catholic."

"There had been brought into the federal school system by January 1, 1924, 4,406 elementary schools, 237 night schools, 19 regional schools, and 14 industrial schools. But there are in all Mexico 14,231 elementary schools. Thus nearly 10,000 are without federal aid. These are the Church schools, and in many parts of Mexico they are the only ones that exist." (New York Times, July 30.)

After Diaz, came the reformers, the revolutionists, the counter-revolutionists, and the anti-religious campaign, with its closing of schools, its suppression of convents and monasteries, its prohibition against religious teaching, its limitation of priests, its banishing of priests and prelates, its imprisonments and fines, with its shutting up of orphanages, with its closing down of hospitals, with its theft or "confiscation" (to be constitutional) of Church property. This is the black climax of today, the day of the despot Plutarco Calles!

In contrast to the complacent editorial of the New York Times (August 1) characterizing the present impasse in Mexico as Domestic Trouble, is the sane and conservative editorial of the London Times (July 30): "These teachings [of the Church] are the only spiritual and moral influence to guide the lives of millions [of Mexicans]. What conceivable advantage to a state and society can come from this violent suppression where there is not even a pretense that anything exists to take their place?"

REV. PETER MORAN.

THE STRUGGLE IN MEXICO

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—The struggle in Mexico is a wonderful reagent in the precipitation of people's real opinions! It enables us to determine—both qualitatively and quantitatively—the "Christianity" of a Methodist missionary, the "liberalism" of a "pink" journal, the "courage" of newspaper editors in editorial expressions, and the "Catholic spirit" of some Catholics—not to mention the ability of a Mexican politician to tell the truth.

It is likely to furnish an excellent test of the intelligence, the spirit of fair play, the love of liberty, and the Christianity existing in the American people. Let us observe it carefully; we may learn much from it concerning the inmost thoughts of our fellow-citizens.

T. F. W.

ON BEHALF OF THE FARMER

Denton, Texas.

TO the Editor:—Readers of The Commonweal, issue of July 28, must have been surprised when they saw the editorial On Behalf of the Farmer. Did city readers peruse it? Did not some highbrow readers turn over a new leaf saying: "What concern do I have in the farmer? I am not his keeper."

But, kind friend, it may be said that the despised farmer is your keeper. Does he not keep you from starvation? May The Commonweal continue to be the friend of the despised and unknown farmer and the man who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow. These two classes of men are the backbone of our country. The world can get along without skyscrapers, railroads, banks, automobiles, airplanes, telephones, cosmetics, and luxurious palaces, but never without farmers and laboring men. It seems our government does not know that, since it takes no notice of farmers and laboring men. God bless Father O'Hara for his great interest in the farmer.

REV. RAYMOND VERNIMONT.

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BOOKS

United States Catholic Historical Society: Historical Records and Studies. Volume XXVII. New York: 1926.

THE volumes issued periodically by the United States Catholic Historical Society are always a mine of information on American Catholic history. The twenty-seventh, just published, is notable for two articles. To one, a brief biography of Judge William Gaston, by Dr. Edward F. McSweeney, is appended a textual transcript of the famous speech delivered by this early champion of Catholic liberties, at the North Carolina Convention in June, 1830, and it is enough to say that there is hardly any argument advanced in our own day for the curtailment of the liberties enjoyed by the Catholic Church under democracy, which will not find itself anticipated and answered in this historic address.

The bulk of the Society's volume is given up to an article by Dr. Peter Guilday which is the longest and best sustained notice upon John Gilmary Shea, the historian, that has yet appeared. It is with some surprise that we read, on turning to a preface, that, although thirty-four years have passed since his death on February 22, 1892, only "short biographical notices" have paid tribute to a life that is full of inspiration and interest, not always of a nature pleasant to contemplate across the perspective of years. In another part of this issue, the significance of Shea's work is studied in its relation to the writing of history generally. But it will be of interest to recapitulate a few of the attendant circumstances which heighten the merit of his career and earn him his place in the martyrology of learning.

The first was his poverty. To such a scholarly and unworldly mind as his, immersed in the past, this may seem a minor deprivation. But with Shea it took the one form a scholar dreads, distraction from his real occupation and the dire necessity of interrupting his researches to do uncongenial work that many another man could have done as well. "Year in and year out," says Dr. Guilday, "he was forced to labor at things that were trivial and ephemeral compared to the work his genius called him to do. For well-nigh twenty years his only steady income came from his salary as editor-in-chief of Frank Leslie's publications. . . . Poverty sat behind Shea's shoulder all through these middle years, and there are pages in his business relations with certain Catholic publishers which had best be allowed to pass into oblivion." Niggardliness, exploitation, oppression, all the humiliations that the unworldly mind is called on to suffer when economic reasons subject it to the shrewd, coarse, money-getting instinct, were Shea's cross almost to the end of his laborious life. One passage in a letter to the Archbishop of New York, wrung from this fine scholar and gentleman by domestic suffering, is almost unbelievable. One hopes that never under any circumstances could such an injustice as it reveals be perpetrated today.

The second hardship came from his knowledge that he had arrived terribly late on the scene and that his material was perishing before his eyes. To a mind once seized with enthusiasm for research, the destruction of records of the past comes home as a positive calamity. There is something in it as irreparable as the burning of the sibylline books. "Not only has little been done," he writes the year before his death, "but some of that little has been destroyed. A Father Ulrich, one of the early Benedictines of Saint Vincent's Abbey, kept a diary for many years . . . recording every event in the community and in the Church in that part of western Pennsylvania. They were all destroyed by order of Abbot Wimmer. Bishop de St. Palais ordered all the papers of the Vincennes diocese, gathered, bound and indexed by his predecessor, to be destroyed. These were cases of deliberate destruction, while of those resulting from ignorance and indifference it would be impossible to make a record."

Hardest of all to endure must have been the coldness, amounting at times to discourtesy and hostility, he had to suffer from those in authority who should have been his warmest coöperators and backers. Among the documents for which he had the most urgent need for his history were the letters of Bishop Bruté of Vincennes, whose life as priest and bishop in America from 1810 to 1839 "coincided with some of the most important years in Catholic American history." Exactly who or what was responsible for the disappearance of this invaluable material Dr. Guilday does not attempt to say, beyond recording the bare fact that the future Archbishop Bayley, then bishop auxiliary, refused to return them to the officials of the Vincennes diocese or to let them be examined for historical purposes. "What had happened to the Bruté papers will probably never be known. Father Audran, of Vincennes, made an attempt to have them sent back, but Bishop Bayley refused to give them up. That Shea was also refused access to the collection is certain from his letter to Father Audran, dated November 20, 1854: 'Bishop Bayley told me that he had Bishop Bruté's letters and papers. I did not, however, get access to them. Though I hinted my wish very clearly, I forbore to press it, as I thought that, though once intended for the Church, my actual lay position would be an obstacle to my rummaging a bishop's papers.' "

It is pleasant to record that, toward the close of Shea's life, the difficulties and hardships that pressed upon him for so many years, lifted, and that he died aware that his self-sacrifice had not been in vain, but might be trusted to bear its fruit in due season. From the great cardinal-archbishop of America's Catholic city he got the help and inspiration that was to be expected, and one of Archbishop Corrigan's titles to our affectionate memory is the fact that, largely owing to his interest and material aid, the great historian's later years were his happiest and easiest. Honors and recognition, accepted in Christian humility, reached him before the end. He died kissing a rosary which had been the gift of Cardinal Gibbons. He is probably the only man who has ever corrected proofs after receiving the Last Sacraments. The mere fact is his life's best epitome, and the best epitaph on his death.

Faults have been found with Gilmary Shea's magnum opus: The History of the Church in the United States. One, of which Dr. Guilday concedes the justice, is its lack of "arrangement." "Dr. Shea," he admits regretfully, "was not able to solve a problem which yet remains to be answered: how to treat in a systematic fashion geographical units that still stand apart ecclesiastically in spite of all identities and similarities." Another, which it is not so easy to admit, is a somewhat oratorical style, noticeable in a day when so few men write from the heart as well as the head. Probably the great-souled writer who never gave a thought to fame or repute, was conscious of his faults, as he was certainly conscious that what he had done bore only a slight proportion to the work that remained to do. But his fame rests upon ground that is not to be shaken by changes in literary fashion. A vision seized upon his imagination. In order that he might be free to follow it faithfully, he took poverty as his bride. And no American

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Catholic historian of the future, no matter how vividly and persuasively he writes, will dare neglect the debt he owes him. It might almost be said that in proportion to the frankness of its acknowledgment by him, will his own sincerity be judged.

HENRY LONGAN STUART.

Italy Under Mussolini, by William Bolitho. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

THIS is precisely the kind of book that should be written about Fascism and its leader—a clear, keen, intelligent examination based on the actual facts and on carefully compiled figures. To any American who, like the present reviewer, has lived for years in Italy, the snap judgments passed on Fascism by the majority of Americans, even those who ought to know better, are depressing, founded as they are in most instances on a mixture of ignorance and facile emotionalism.

Mr. Bolitho's admirable book proves a wholesome antidote. It displays profound knowledge of the situation and its origins; it is ballasted with significant figures, data, and statistics; it investigates searchingly such matters as the Fascist doctrine, the foreign policy of Fascism, its enemies, Fascist finance, the militia, the Fascist Internationale. It is all very cold and clear and unemotional. Yet, just for this, the book is a more terrible indictment of the régime than the hysterical attacks of most of Fascism's enemies, and beneath it, despite Mr. Bolitho's claim to objectivity and rigid impartiality, there glows a passion of hatred that is of tremendous import because it is founded on knowledge, not ignorance.

To review the book in detail is impssible in a short space; it is too full of matter. I can only note hastily a few of the things Mr. Bolitho has done in it and hope devoutly that everyone sincerely curious about conditions in Italy today may turn to the book itself. Mr. Bolitho gives an excellent concise account of Mussolini's early public history and punctures once for all the cheap legend that has been built up about him, revealing the man as neither a Napoleon nor a Mohammed but as "a variety of Socialist boss," a callous, dishonest opportunist who "has robbed his own country of liberty and of all that makes life in common worth while," and in whose régime is no idea, no constructive doctrine, nothing—only the reckless will to power. He shows patiently, what has been shown to no avail before: that the Fascists did not save Italy from Communism, as the Fascists have so monotonously asserted and reasserted until a majority of foreigners and even a good many Italians credit the claim. He gives a clear account of the origins of Fascism, which have been deliberately obscured today, and shows how power began for the party only when it sold out to the big industrialists. I wish he might have found space to quote the initial published program of Fascism. It was more radical than any program of radical Italian Socialists. He describes coldly the terrible and terribly corrupt "Ras" system, gives an account of the Cheka and shows how the semi-official murder of Matteotti destroyed it before it had reached full growth; examines with damaging coolness the truth about the Italian finances under Fascism and the facts about the budget.

Most important of all are the chapters on the Fascist doctrine and the Fascist Internationale. These are invaluable, for they show beyond the shadow of a doubt that there is no constructive doctrine beneath Fascism, which invents doctrines (often mutually conflicting) retrospectively, as it goes along, to fit the most recently accomplished facts. For example, when, after the Matteotti murder, "the majority of the parliamentary opposition refused collaboration with him," Mussolini abolished all but a straw parliament and then launched the theory that parliaments and democratic government will not work, are outworn. "The attitude of Fascism toward the liberty of the press is equally a practical matter; the newspapers were suppressed first to stop their tongues, and the theory that the enlightenment of the public on the news of the day was too important a function to be left to private enterprise came afterward and is not worth discussion." "There is," says Mr. Bolitho, "no more a doctrine of Fascism than a doctrine of smallpox."

Mr. Bolitho's estimate of the helplessness of Fascism's enemies, vastly in the majority though they are and comprising all that is best and finest in the nation, makes distressing reading. It is indeed hard to start a revolution today against an organized tyranny. As he says, the day of barricades is past, and the suppression of a free press and of all freedom of speech and of assembly has been shown to be appallingly easy. Almost the only hope, for the moment, lies in the unshakably coldly hostile attitude of the Church, which remains unmoved by all Mussolini's cheap attempts to placate it—his abolition of Freemasonry, reintroduction of the Crucifix into the schools, etc.

On one or two points—of speculation, not of fact—I differ from Mr. Bolitho. For instance, I doubt whether Facta really did have a secret agreement with Mussolini at the moment of the march on Rome. Mr. Bolitho (without evidence) thinks that he did. It is an unimportant problem in psychology. I find the account of the Fascist tyranny, the perfect system, a bit overdone, too flattering to the Fascists. Apparently, it is a rigid machine; actually, its workings can be evaded without too great difficulty. Most anything or anyone can slip through it.

There is also, I think, a good deal of Machiavellianism manqué about the Fascist régime. For example, when recently (since Mr. Bolitho's book was written) Amendola died as a result of wounds received from his brutal beatings, a nonexistent death-bed statement from him, saying that he had died of a disease from which he had suffered for years and absolving the Fascists of all responsibility, was lavishly published by the Fascist press. But presently it became known that the document was false, with far more damaging result to the régime than if Amendola's death had been chronicled without comment. Again, I do not agree with Mr. Bolitho's estimate of the exaggerated nationalism of the average Italian. This, I think, in so far as it exists, is largely a reaction from the "inferiority complex" of pre-war days which made the Italians so delightful a people—not because they gave one a sense of superiority but because one dealt with them as individuals. Moreover, the wild nationalism that has sprung up since the war is, I believe, characteristic only of the noisy minority. The great majority are still blessedly without it, leading their lives much as before, and cultivated thoughtful Italians despise it.

I hope most earnestly that this clear-sighted admirable book will profoundly affect American public opinion in regard to Fascism. But if you ask me whether I think it will, I do not. People will go on, just as before, finding Mussolini a romantic figure, just the right person for Italy, and remarking brightly that Italian trains run on time now.

CLAUDE C. WASHBURN.

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Saint Joan of Arc, by Chanoine Justin Rousseil; translated by Joseph Murphy. New York: Benziger Brothers. $2.40.

THIS book, which deserves every praise, is not a history of the Maid of France but, as the subtitle declares: A Study of the Supernatural in Her Life and Mission. The non-Catholic world or a large part of it cannot understand the career of this girl of seventeen just because it has lost all conception of the supernatural, and the object of this book is to show such people how to look at these things from the only point of view from which they are in the least comprehensible.

Thus we have been told that she was an imposter; she, who by her genius changed the whole course of history, and that by a series of victories in which she outdid even Napoleon, for he made his mistakes while she never did. That she failed in the end at the gates of Paris was no fault of hers but the crime of a weak, worthless wretch unworthy of the name of a man, whom she had made king and who then and afterwards in her hour of need basely deserted her. She was a hysteric; though no one ever was clearer in her mind nor more unfailing in judgment at moments of crisis. She was coached by wily priests—who must then have been greater masters of the art of war than the professional soldiers of the day; she who declared at her trial that she had never confided her revelations to any cleric. She was an early reformer, a harbinger of the Protestant reformation to come, a victim of free thought versus spiritual tyranny; she who wore the scapular of the Third Order of Saint Francis, a much more serious business then than now; she who wished in all things to do as Mother Church would desire. She was even a devil-worshipper; the suggestion of a recent woman writer—save the mark—who caps this pyramid of absurdities that has been built up.

Such are the fantastic legends invented by those who will not or cannot use their common sense to look at things as they are. Will not in cases like that of M. Thibauld, better known as Anatole France, who, in his shameless book, wilfully misrepresented the holy, pure, and innocent being who was all that his mind detested. Even so far does his hatred carry him as to lead him to assert that "Joan was worth nothing as a soldier, and her influence with the French army was very small." How, then, came it that she led all the victorious onslaughts, the tactics for which were her own? A contemporary writer could have told him: "Nothing useful or important has been accomplished except by the Maid." Even creatures of this kind have their uses, for France induced Dr. Dumas, a competent neurologist, to make a careful examination into Joan's record with the hope that he might light on facts consonant with the great hysteria theory. Balaam came to curse but remained to bless and so did Dumas, whose evidence is entirely in favor of the singular sanity of the Maid and of the absence of any evidence for hallucinations in her case.

Very unsavory and unmentionable composts are employed to raise rare flowers, and France brought forth Andrew Lang's masterpiece on the Maid from which much quotation is freely made in the book under review.

After all, the matter is neatly and completely summed up by an unbeliever in religion, Bernard Shaw, when he says: "The simplest French peasant who believes in apparitions of celestial persons to favored mortals is nearer to the scientific truth about Joan than the rationalist and materialist historians and essayists who feel bound to set down a girl who saw saints and heard them talking to her as either crazy or mendacious."

As to the book we are dealing with it is written by a man of great erudition and wide reading, in an attractive manner and with admirable arrangement of the argument and matter. It is adequately translated and well printed.

BERTRAM C. A. WINDLE.

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The Leahy Dante Prize Competition

THE preliminary survey of the manuscripts received in contest for The Leahy Dante Prize of One Thousand Dollars is highly encouraging to the hopes of the donor and the committee that will award the prize. Many well-known scholars have submitted studies on the various phases of Dante literature and history, and there are new names among the contestants, the merit of whose work leaves the decision and award entirely open at the present time.

The Commonweal wishes to emphasize that the final date for the acceptance of the Dante manuscripts in this contest will be the first day of September, 1926. We reprint the conditions of the competition, as laid down by the committee in charge:

1. The competition is open to all contestants irrespective of religion or nationality.
2. The essay shall be written in English, and its literary merit shall be considered an important element of its value.
3. The nature of the essay desired is of an interpretative rather than of a philological or research character.
4. It shall not contain more than 5,000 words.
5. A typewritten copy of it must be sent to the Dante Prize Committee, care of THE COMMONWEAL, Grand Central Terminal, New York City, on or before September 1, 1926. All manuscripts should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.
6. The winning essay will be published in THE COMMONWEAL.

The jury of award is composed of the following scholars:

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DR. C. A. DINSMORE
DR. JOHN H. FINLEY
DR. CHARLES HALL GRANDGENT
REV. T. LAWRASON RIGGS
REV. THOMAS M. SCHWERTNER, O.P.
DR. JOEL E. SPINGARN
REV. M. I. STRITCH, S.J.
DR. HENRY OSBORN TAYLOR
DR. JAMES J. WALSH

All essays must be addressed to:

DANTE COMMITTEE, THE COMMONWEAL
Grand Central Terminal, New York

Pursuing the Whale, by John A. Cook; with an introduction by Allan Forbes. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.00.

MEN of action seldom speak another language. What they do they are, so clearly and completely that there is no need of words. Outside of the imperative mood, they appear ill at ease and taciturn. When they narrate, it is with economy, and almost entirely without color.

Such a man is Captain Cook; an intrepid leader; an indomitable commander; a man who has done things—not a writer of books. One suspects that the idea of writing a book never would have entered his head except by persuasion. It was written painstakingly and, like a corduroy road, is made of logs. It is not so much a book as the raw material for a book: one of, say one-quarter its length; which, in the hands of a skilled artisan, might have been made memorable.

None the less, after reading Pursuing the Whale; after spending, with the author, long Arctic winters locked in the ice in the dark; after fighting mutinies and incendiary fires on the high seas; after serving as extemporary surgeon to the injured, and generator of morale for a whole ship's company, and at every opportunity, adventuring one's fortunes, and not infrequently, one's life, upon what the author calls the "saving" of whales, one closes the book with an overwhelming temptation to murmur: "You are a better man than I am, Captain Cook!"

Moreover, this record of an ended era is of very real historical value. It will take its place, inevitably, upon the shelves of reference, where the Conrads, Masefields, and Melvilles of the future will come upon it and rifle it for immortality.

The book is appropriately illustrated and contains a pleasant foreword by Allan Forbes.

BENJAMIN R. C. LOW.

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THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

Miss Brynmarian was scribbling rapidly in a corner, surrounded by sheets of yellow paper. Enter, Dr. Angelicus, with his customary Monday morning tardiness and depression.

"I find that it is not only the week-ends in toto that upset me," he explained as he removed his hat, "but actually the Sundays themselves."

"Was it a long sermon?" asked Miss Brynmarian, sympathetically.

"You misunderstand me," said the Doctor, settling himself in his chair.

"Perhaps it was an old lady behind you who disturbed you by saying her prayers out loud," guessed Miss Brynmarian. "Or someone rattling a rosary on the back of your pew?"

"Far worse than that," replied the Doctor, "for such occurrences would not, at least, have gone on all day."

"What, then, is wrong with the day of worship?" inquired the mystified Miss Brynmarian.

"Ah, there you have it!" exclaimed the Doctor. "If they would only keep it a day of worship! I am beginning, after long years of repugnance for them, to have a certain sympathy for the Puritans who severely punished all activities on the Sabbath except those concerned with religion. I can even see a reason for the stocks."

"Whom would you have placed in them?" asked Miss Brynmarian.

"Playwrights," declared the Doctor, vindictively.

Miss Brynmarian flushed unaccountably, and quickly covered her yellow sheets of script with a newspaper.

"Yesterday morning," continued the Doctor, "on entering the church, I happened to choose a seat right across from my old friend, Owen Travers, who has, as you know, several Broadway successes to his credit. In the midst of my own devotions, I could not fail to remark his piety. 'Here is a man,' thought I, 'who obviously has made great spiritual progress, and contact with whom undoubtedly will improve my own soul.' With this in mind, I hurried after him at the close of the service and accosted him at the door. Still with an ideally remote expression on his face, he murmured:

"'At last it has come to me!'

"'What?' I asked, expecting a great spiritual revelation.

"'The climax to my third act,' said he."

"Maybe it's a spiritual play," suggested Miss Brynmarian. "Even if it isn't, I can't see why that would justify putting him in the stocks."

"Oh, can't you?" asked the Doctor in irritation. "Well, if he had dragged you home with him and forcibly made you listen as he read four acts and eight scenes aloud to you, and you had thus missed your train to Long Island, perhaps you would!"

"Apropos of all this," said Miss Brynmarian, hesitatingly, as she picked up her yellow sheets, "do you mind listening to my own play, now almost completed?"

"Help!" cried the Doctor, starting for the door. "Two days in succession!"

"Wait a moment," she called after him. "It's only a one-act sketch."

"Must you?" sighed the Doctor, as he reluctantly returned to his chair.

"It's my first offense," explained Miss Brynmarian apologetically.

At this moment, Britannicus and Primus Criticus walked in, arguing violently.

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"I tell you it's all wrong!" exclaimed Primus Criticus.

The Doctor looked relieved at the interruption. "What is?" he asked.

"His second act," said Primus Criticus. "His climax comes too soon."

"So does mine," murmured Angelicus helplessly, as he sank back, overcome.

"I think you're entirely mistaken," maintained Britannicus, hotly. "Doctor Angelicus, you shall be the judge. Just listen to this." And Britannicus pulled a typed script from his pocket.

"Let me, rather," interrupted Primus Criticus, reaching for his brief-case, "read you my own solution of a second-act climax, and you will see what I mean." But before he had time to commence, the door was flung open and the Editor himself was in their midst.

"Ah!" he exclaimed delightedly. "I'm glad to find all of you here. I've just finished a melodrama I've been working on for some time, and I want to get your assembled opinion of it."

Doctor Angelicus slumped deeper in his chair, the picture of complete despondency, and there was an awkward pause for a moment, presently to be broken by a cheery whistle outside in the corridor. On its last trill, Tittivillus slid through the open doorway.

"Oh, Doctor," he exclaimed exultantly, rushing up to Angelicus and throwing a manuscript on his desk, "here's my play! It's finished, and I want you to read it."

"Et tu, Tittivillus!" cried the Angelic One, as he collapsed, his head dropping forward on the desk.

But the series of dramatic entrances was still to continue, for at this moment Hereticus burst in, shouting:

"The leopard! The one that escaped from the zoo in New Jersey! It's in the building, and is coming down the corridor!"

In a second the library was in an uproar, and its inmates leaped for window-sills, book-cases, and desk-tops.

Dr. Angelicus, whose desk was near the only closet, jumped nimbly toward it, upsetting a fresh jar of paste on the floor as he scurried inside and pulled the door shut behind him. And sure enough, in the breathless pause that followed, in loped the spotted jungle cat, a dangerous, hungry light in his eyes. Terrorized, they all trembled on their various perches as the fearsome beast went from one to another, sniffing them up and down, only to turn away from each in apparent distaste. Presently he spied the upset jar of paste, made for it, and was soon lapping it up with great enthusiasm. It was a hasty meal, completed with despatch, and when the last drop was gone, Sir Leopard, satisfied, ambled amiably out of the library. Miss Brynmarian jumped from her perch on the window-sill, slammed the library door, and then went over to the closet.

"Come out, Doctor," she called. "You've missed something. He was such a cute, adorable leopard! He only ate the paste and wouldn't touch one of us!"

"Ah," said the Doctor, as he cautiously opened the door and peered from his retreat, "there's nothing remarkable about his fastidiousness. You see, you are all playwrights."

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